

House  
REPUBLICAN  
Conference

# FloorPrep

Legislative Digest

Tuesday, April 20, 1999

J.C. Watts, Jr.  
Chairman  
4th District, Oklahoma

*House Meets at 12:30 p.m. for Morning Hour and  
2:00 p.m. for Legislative Business  
(No Votes Before 2:00 p.m.)*

*Anticipated Floor Action:*

**H.R. 573—Presenting a Congressional Gold Medal to Rosa Parks**  
**H.R. 208—Federal Thrift Savings Plan Participation Act**  
**H.Res. 128—Condemning the Murder of Rosemary Nelson**  
**H.Con.Res. 54—Celebrating the Good Friday Peace Agreement**  
**H.R. 1379—Making a Technical Correction to the FY 1999 Omnibus  
Appropriations Act**



## **Bills Considered Under Suspension of the Rules**

**Floor Situation:** The House will consider the following five bills under suspension of the rules as its first order of business today. Each is debatable for 40 minutes, may not be amended, and requires a two-thirds majority vote for passage.

**H.R. 573—Presenting a Congressional Gold Medal to Rosa Parks** authorizes the president to present, on behalf of Congress, a gold medal to Rosa Parks in recognition of her contributions to the nation. The bill authorizes up to \$30,000 to cover the cost of providing the medal. The actual amount spent for the medal is recouped by the U.S. Mint through the sale of authentic bronze reproductions of the medal. Rosa Parks is often called the “first lady of civil rights” for sparking the civil rights movement after her arrest for refusing to give up her seat on a bus to a white man in Montgomery, Alabama. A CBO cost estimate was unavailable at press time. The bill was introduced by Mrs. Carson *et al.* and was reported by the Banking Subcommittee on Domestic and International Monetary Policy by voice vote on March 25, 1999.

**H.R. 208—Federal Employees Thrift Savings Plan** authorizes newly-hired federal employees to transfer balances from other tax-deferred savings, including private sector 401(k) accounts, to the Thrift Savings Plan, the civilian retirement program of the federal government. It also authorizes federal employees to

begin participating in the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) immediately upon being hired rather than after two open seasons, as under current law (however, federal matching contributions still will not begin until the second open season). Furthermore, the bill contains provisions designed to offset revenue losses resulting from allowing immediate participation in the TSP; federal agencies must transfer funds amounting to 0.01 percent of their Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) payroll to the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund. The bill was introduced by Mrs. Morella and was reported by the Government Reform Committee by voice vote on April 13, 1999.

**H.Res. 128—Condemning the Murder of Rosemary Nelson** expresses the sense of the House to recognize the historic significance of the 1998 Good Friday Peace Accords and commend the people of Northern Ireland for their commitment to work together in peace. The resolution also condemns all violence committed in violation of the Northern Ireland cease-fire agreement and calls on the Government of the United Kingdom to (1) launch an inquiry independent of that of the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) to gather evidence, conduct the ground investigation, and issue a detailed, public report on the murder of defense attorney Rosemary Nelson; (2) institute an independent judicial inquiry into allegations that defense attorneys are systematically harassed and intimidated by security forces; and (3) implement the United Nations Special Rapporteur's recommendation for an independent inquiry into the possibility of collusion in the killing of defense attorney Patrick Finucane. The bill was introduced by Mr. Smith (NJ) and was passed by voice vote by the International Relations Committee on March 25, 1999.

**H.Con.Res. 54** recognizes the historical significance of the first anniversary of the Good Friday Peace Agreement and salutes British Prime Minister Tony Blair and Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern, as well as the elected representatives of the political parties in Northern Ireland, for creating the opportunity for a negotiated peace settlement. It also commends former Senator George Mitchell for his leadership on behalf of the U.S. in guiding the parties towards peace and congratulates the people of the Republic of Ireland and of Northern Ireland for their courageous commitment to work together in peace. Finally, H.Con.Res. 54 reaffirms the bonds of friendship and cooperation that exist between the U.S. and the governments of the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom, which ensure that the U.S. and those governments will continue as partners in peace.

**H.R. 1379** corrects a drafting error in the FY 1999 Omnibus Appropriations Act (*P.L. 105-277*). That law included a supplemental appropriation of \$690 million for drug interdiction, international narcotics control, and law enforcement assistance. However, it omitted certain authorizing language directing how the funding was to be spent. The bill makes a technical correction to ensure that \$60 million of the supplemental funding is spent according to an agreement reached between Congress and the administration. A CBO cost estimate was unavailable at press time. The bill was introduced by Mr. Gilman and was reported by voice vote by the International Relations Committee on April 15, 1999.

**Additional Information:** See *Legislative Digest*, Vol. XXVIII, #10, April 16, 1999.



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